

ABSTRACT

The present invention relates to methods and systems for providing printing services over a communications network. In particular, the present invention enables a user to obtain print jobs at an unspecified location which may be remote from the source of the print job. A spooling server is used to store a print job received via the network from a print job source. A printer polling device, which may be at a location remote from the print job source, is capable of polling the spooling server via the network to identify whether any print jobs associated with the printer polling device are available for printing at an associated printer. The spooling server need not initiate contact with the printer through a firewall, since it is polled by the printer polling device. Thus, network security is maintained. A fee can be charged for the printing services provided.